

Message Text

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44

ACTION AF-07

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-04 INR-05 LAB-01

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 L-02 AGR-05 AID-05 /032 W

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R 181055Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3798

C O N F I D E N T I A L MONROVIA 6576

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, LI, US

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE REASONS BEHIND FIRESTONE REQUEST FOR MEETING

REF: (A) MONROVIA 0948; (B) MONROVIA 1454

1. UNABLE OBTAIN FURTHER INFORMATION ON CASES MENTIONED STAFF MEETING MINUTES. REPORT WAS THAT TWO CASES "INVOLVING FIRESTONE" WERE PENDING AND THAT MINISTRY OF LABOR, YOUTH AND SPORTS (MLYS) HAD GO-AHEAD FROM PRESIDENT TO IMPOSE SANCTIONS, WHEREAS FIRESTONE HAS PREVIOUSLY ENJOYED "HANDS-OFF" STATUS. SOURCE IS SENSITIVE AND WOULD BE IN VULNERABLE POSITION IF OUR KNOWLEDGE OF THIS WERE REVEALED TO MLYS. THEREFORE EMBASSY INQUIRIES HAVE BEEN DISCREET. FIRESTONE, LABOR UNION, AND MINISTRY CONTACTS PROVIDE NO ILLUMINATION. EMBASSY AWARE MLYS GENERALLY FEELS THAT FIRESTONE, ALTHOUGH A PIONEER IN PROVIDING WORKER BENEFITS, NOW DOES NOT PROVIDE EMPLOYEES ADEQUATE SCHOOLING, HOUSING, MEDICAL CARE, OR SANITARY FACILITIES; THAT COMPANY'S WAGES UNREALISTICALLY LOW; AND THAT IT IS FOOTDRAGGING ON LIBERIANIZATION OF MANAGEMENT POSITIONS.

2. DOUBT THAT COMPANY REPS WILL HAVE THIS ISSUE IN MIND IN DISCUSSION WITH DEPARTMENT, SINCE COMPANY PRESUMABLY NOT AWARE OF MLYS MANDATE. MOREOVER, FIRESTONE HAS DEALT WITH MANY SUCH CASES BEFORE WITHOUT CONSULTING USG. (CASES IN QUESTION PENDING BEFORE MLYS BOARD OF GENERAL APPEALS, WHICH HAS ONLY ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY TO IMPOSE FINES, AWARD COMPENSATION, AND THE LIKE, FOR INFRINGEMENTS OF LABOR LAW, BUT JUDICIAL APPEAL FROM

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BOARD'S DECISIONS IS AVAILABLE.)

3. MORE PROBABLY COMPANY WISHES DISCUSS RECENT HIATUS IN
NEGOTIATION OF NEW CONCESSION AGREEMENT WITH GOL. GOL WAS
UNEXPECTEDLY UNDEMANDING IN ITS APPROACH, BUT RECENTLY CAUSED
AN ADJOURNMENT OF PROCEEDINGS DELIBERATELY BY ASKING FOR DATA
IT KNEW WAS UNAVAILABLE. EMBASSY HAS NO INKLING WHAT, IF ANY,
MOTIVATION IS BEHIND GOL DELAY. FOR BACKGROUND ON CONCESSION
NEGOTIATIONS SEE REFTELS.
MANFULL

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Message Attributes

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